363 the main street as a result of an unlucky chance that just as they
361 were passing through a bottomless mire their carriage broke down and they were unable to work their way out of the soft mud. More than once have I witnessed riders sunk to the waist in the soft ground, and once I saved the life of a youth near the bazaar who fell head first into mud a meter thick when his horse stumbled, and only his legs stuck out. In most recent times, thanks to the efforts of the Russian /169/ administration, the street conditions have improved considerably, but they still leave much to be desired. A fundamental improvement is impossible /Figure 60. Caption: The main street of Tashkent./ without quite disproportionate costs, for the loess base, which becomes bottomless every winter, makes paving and macadamizing far more /170/ difficult, as the Russians have often enough discovered in the laying out of the streets in their town.

A basic fault of the Turkestan streets is that, with the exception of the few main streets, they are so narrow that two carriages cannot pass each other and always one of the two vehicles which meet must back up until he succeeds in passing through a side alley. On bazaar days traffic jams lasting for hours often occur as a result of this. Four-wheeled wagons cannot be used at all in such narrow alleys because one cannot turn around with them. This bad situation is clearly caused by the fact that the street inside the town wall had to be used sparingly in order not to increase the circumference of the town walls too much. For otherwise the Central Asian towns have a disproportionately large expansion since all the houses consist only of a ground floor, and are always surrounded by more or less extensive courts and even gardens.

363 If the streets in Central Asian towns are bad enough for these
● 351 reasons, their unfavorable aspect is increased substantially by the
361 fact that there are no houses along them but only uniform courtyard walls of yellow clay the endless monotony of which is broken only here and there by a tiny gate which one would sooner take for the entrance to a pigsty than to a human dwelling. For the dwelling houses are all located within the courts, and even the view of the courts, when one opens the gate off the street, is cut off, for behind each gate is a special wall. The height of the court walls which enclose the streets on both sides is arranged so that one cannot see over even when on horseback or riding a camel; they are, therefore, usually three to three and a half meters high. The streets which lead through the dwelling quarter inside the town walls differ in no way

from those passing between the gardens and fields outside the circular walls, since the latter are enclosed in walls exactly like those around the dwellings within the town. Therefore, upon entering a strange town the only way to tell whether one is still among the fields and gardens, or already between the rows of houses, is on the basis of whether one has passed through the town gate. In all Central Asian towns the streets are crooked, and continue in a perpetual zigzag, the natives have no notion of a regular arrangement of rows of streets, and preliminary plans in the erection of houses. Only the main streets of Tashkent, which /171/ lead from the bazaar to the outlying districts have a semblance of regularity, although they also possess numerous bends and turns. 363 351 361

The terrible monotony of the streets in Sart Tashkent is only broken here and there by a mosque or 'medrese' /religious school/, by isolated tombs which are found in the middle of the town along the roads, by the rising or downward slope of the ground, and by the many streams, sometimes flowing in deep ravines, which cut across the entire town in all directions. In this respect Tashkent makes a much better impression, in spite of everything, than /Figure 61. p.199a Caption: Street scene in Bukhara (from a photograph by G. Merzbacher)/ most of the other towns of Turkestan, most of which lie in more or less level terrain. 361

Concerning the traffic in the streets of Tashkent, this differs greatly in different parts of the town. In the side streets one sees only isolated riders or strollers; the main streets leading to the bazaar, especially on market days, are filled all day long with endless lines of camel, horse and donkey caravans, wagons, and riders of horses, donkeys and camels, through which it is often difficult to make one's way, even with the assiduous use of the horsewhip. This means is not used only by the Russians, but also and even more widely by the natives /172/ themselves, for in Turkestan everyone who is prominent, either through rank or wealth, considers himself entitled to enforce his precedence, by the 'ultima ratio' of the 'nagaika' /whip/ over less fortunate creatures, while the victims of this treatment consider it perfectly in order and use it themselves against those still lower in rank. Yielding is considered a sign of weakness by the Central Asians, and there is no better way of gaining their respect than a show of arrogance and the use of brute force. The Russians, therefore, are born, as it were, to the rule of the Central Asians. 363 361 [554]

wooden posts, as can be seen in Figure 82, p. 229. Facing the court, 343
the stalls are as open as the verandas and therefore they provide shelter only against rain and snow, while the animals are exposed, without protection against the winter cold. Fodder troughs made of clay run the length of the walls of the stalls. /247/ Their borders are made of beams to prevent their crumbling away.

These stalls serve not only as shelter for the horses, donkeys and oxen of the owner but also for the riding animals and beasts of burden of the visitors and guests. Therefore they are always laid out on a much larger scale than would be necessary for the needs of the owner alone. In addition, the stalls are also used for the storage of grain, alfalfa, straw, etc., and for the night lodging of the boys and servants during the rain. The winter provisions are piled up on dry alfalfa on the roofs of the stables and are either exposed without protection to the rain and snow or in the best circumstances are covered on top with reed mats.

Threshed grain is stored in the same kind of underground pits as the nomads use. The historians of Alexander the Great already mention these underground storage granaries, which they called seir or sir, as a characteristic of the Bactrians and the Sogdians who were the inhabitants of Turkestan of that time. (1)

1. Curtius, for example, writes in Chapter 17 of Book VII concerning the presence of underground granaries in Bactria, the Afghan Turkestan of today: Siros vocabant barbari scrobes, quos ita sollerter abscondunt, ut, nisi qui defoderunt, invenire non possint: in his conditae fruges erant.

In the middle of the court there is a pond of a larger or smaller 312
size and its stagnant and usually incredibly dirty water is used not only for drinking water for cattle but also for humans, as well as being used for the preparation of tea and food and in the meantime for washing clothes as well.

From the court one enters the gardens by a small low door, and 351
this is the real dwelling place of the more prosperous Central Asians during the warm part of the year. The gardens are usually planted very densely with trees to provide as intense a shade as possible, and they are intersected by a countless number of small canals which serve

351 to water the trees, for, of course, nothing grows without artificial irrigation. What makes the European uncomfortable in these otherwise splendid gardens is the complete absence of green grass. This is caused by the fact that the canals which serve only for the watering of the trees all cut deeply into the earth, and therefore cannot be used to water the surfaces. For this reason the earth floor in the gardens has the same monotonous yellow gray coloring as the courts, streets and garden walls, and in the best cases it is grown over with dry straw-yellow spear grass and other weeds which have grown up from the previous rainy season.

/248/ Somewhere in the middle of the garden a pool is dug out and along its edge a square terrace is built of clay, one to two meters high, depending on the circumstances, which serves as a place to stay during the warmer part of the year. These terraces, which one finds in the courts and gardens of the natives and also at every step in the open squares of the towns and villages, are necessary in order to escape from the dampness and the effluvia and fevers which announce themselves especially after sundown by a peculiar aroma.

342 The natives live on these terraces, which are shaded by tall trees whenever possible. They live either under the open sky or set up so-called Bukharan tents on the terraces, if their means permit. The Russians also have a special fondness for these tents and use them on journeys and in their gardens because of their efficiency. The tents have the form of a cube and are covered with a pyramid-shaped roof. They are very light and convenient to carry, and never take more than a few minutes to set up. /Figure 95. Caption: Bukharan tent./

The Bukharan tents are made of three parts: two folding screens, and an umbrella-like roof which is set up between them. The folding-screens, which are each 2 meters high and 6 meters wide, consist of strong doubled cotton material of a light green color, into which are sewn nine thick upright wooden poles at equal distances from each other. These screens are set up in such a way that the third and seventh upright posts form the corners and the rest of the posts form the sides. (Figure 95). The four edges of the pyramid-shaped roof are also formed by wooden poles sewn into the material. The roof is simply set on the ends of the vertical corner poles of the folding screens by means of special nooses made of cotton bands which are fastened around the poles. In addition, a number of small wooden pins are fastened around the edges of the roof, and over them are